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COMIC SHOP NEWS™



VAMPIRELLA VS. DRACULA

Vampirella Has Moore Dracula Problems

Almost a decade and a half ago, Alan Moore commemorated the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Bram Stoker's Dracula* with "The New European," a Gary Frank-illustrated story that followed Dracula across the ocean as he ventured to America. That powerful short story wasn't forgotten over the subsequent years; instead, it's about to serve as the catalyst for a limited series pitting Dracula against Vampirella.

"The Alan Moore story with art by Gary Frank is one of my personal favorite Vampirella stories, and as usual with Alan the ideas are rich, even in just a single story,"

Dynamite publisher Nick Barrucci said. "It truly is powerful, and while potentially not as many people know about it as should, we're eager to bring this story—and its continuation—to a new and larger audience. But we wanted to wait for a creator who not only appreciated the story, but would add to the entire mythos.

"We were extremely pleased when Joe Harris handed in his *Vampirella And the Scarlet Legion*, as he did an excellent job, so we asked if he would be interested in this project. He gave it some thought, and came up with a story that he felt would build on Alan's story.

"Joe got it—he understood the story, thought about it, and took quite a bit of time to put together an overview—but his overview is more pages than you can imagine. For a six-issue series, he handed in a forty page overview—and that's no exaggeration!"

"When Dynamite asked if I'd be interested in building a *Vampirella/Dracula* series out of what's, honestly, a quite brilliant short comic story by Alan Moore, I really had no idea what to do," Harris said. "The 'New European' presented this updated, chilling vision of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* that really resonates and mines its horror from facets of that immortal story not ordinarily considered when you read the original text.

"When I starting thinking about the possibilities I really got into this. In the original Moore story, protagonist Jack Halloran accepts a regrettable invitation from the mysterious Dragunsun and, in turn, he unwittingly helps this modern iteration of Count Dracula come to the United States where they play out this sort of updated cycle in which Jack is revealed to be this time period's version of Stoker's protagonist, Jonathan Harker while his wife, Mia, is seduced and stolen away by the vampire. Jack is eventually left, broken and alone, in this dingy New York City back alley to consider the audacious horror of it all while this reborn, triumphant Dracula writes this new ending to the classic story and wins where he'd previously failed.

"Considering where to go from here, I wondered, 'what if this cycle never really ends?' What if there are forces at play here pushing our characters toward a sort of pre-ordained narrative in cycles that loop over and over, toying with these characters' lives and loves for their own savage amusement? The story of *Dracula* is a tragedy and, if Dracula found a way to break the arc and prevail... what would this mysterious audience watching this never-ending performance think? What if Jonathan Harker, Jack Halloran or whatever other iteration of the book's hero could figure out how to stop this loop? What if Dracula realized he wanted something else... that Mina Harker was not his true love, and that what and who he really desired lay much further back in the memories of a life *Bram Stoker* was only influenced by but did not chronicle directly? And where does Vampirella fit in?

"So I came up with this series spanning six issues and three time periods, drawing on the works of the original *Bram Stoker* novel, the life and times of Vlad Tepes, the infamous 'Impaler' of 15th century Walachia who drove out the Turks in defense of Christendom only to lose his beloved wife to a suicide that damned her soul to hell, and who sought to debase himself so horribly that he might one day join her there, as well as this modern version, the dark and manipulatively charming Dragunsun introduced in the original Moore short story. Over the ages, he's repeated the same tragic mistakes and lost the same terrible things. But he's finally waking up and asserting control. Only Jonathan Harker is too. As is this shadowy, mystical organization linked in history to Vlad Dracul, 'The Order of the Dragon'—And when they drag Vampirella into this to try and right the ship and protect their investment, things get really interesting... as well as bloody, sexy and violent all at once.

"We're going to

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get into the reasons why this happened, as well as mix things up all over again, as though destiny is reacting to the changes, trying to right the course. Not that our characters are going to always cooperate, mind you..."

Other than their vampirism, Vampiella and Dracula seem to have very little in common; what are their similarities? "Well, they're both outsiders," Harris said. "Both indomitable, sensual presences, and fierce warriors. On the one hand, I see them as the only, true counterparts for one another... drawn to the power each holds and which everyone else around them cannot really fathom... being able to really see one another where that which really makes them what they are is too terrifying for the average person to really consider. I think attraction and lust and desire and all of that stuff really sparks when what they do have in common scrapes up against what they don't."

"Of course, on the other hand, they seem destined to kill one another at every meeting."

Harris isn't looking to soften Dracula's image or transform him into an angst-ridden hero. "I think vampires should be scary, lust-filled, frightening beasts with just enough refinement and elegance on top to make them truly frightening when you strip that elegance away. I was raised on Brian Lumley's *Necroscope* novels and Anne Rice's *Lestat* stories, and I enjoy complicated tales of damnation and power plays, sex and blood. And, though I do adore the *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* TV series for myriad reasons, I generally like my vam-



pires to be absolute bastards. Villainous, unapologetic sociopathic monsters at their worst... struggling to regain some lost humanity or innocence from time to time... and, at their best, serving as an anti-hero you can't help but like even if it makes you feel absolutely filthy as a result."

How do the two characters relate to one another? Is there any commonality in their experience? "Well, the story unfolds over multiple times and locations, each one casting both Vampiella and Dracula in a slightly different light... and it's like they're yearning to break free of something pre-ordained so they might con-

trol their own destiny. They'll alternate between hunted and hunter, enemies and lovers, all the while being pulled by this mysterious, unseen hand that becomes more and more visible in its manipulations and machinations as the series winds on. I think this all builds toward what feels like an obvious commonality... this idea that, across time and space and legend, these two may in fact be made for one another. They may in fact complete what's missing in each of their separate selves. And this will bring them together. Although you shouldn't ever, really, under any circumstances, trust Dracula..."

Who are the mysterious Order of the Dragon who play a pivotal role in the story? "They're based on a cryptic and lore-shrouded Order of knights of which Vlad Tepes, the infamous 'Impaler' of 15th Century history and inspiration for *Bram Stoker's* novel, was a member. The second part of the name, 'Vlad Dracul' means 'dragon'. But I've created a heretofore unknown origin and purpose for this group. I don't want to give away too much, so I'll just say they have a vested interest in the story of Dracula, as first immortalized by author *Bram Stoker*... and they're not happy to see it changed."

Harris warned readers not to automatically assume that Vampiella will take the heroic role in this story. "I can tell you that both she and Dracula span the behavioral spectrum. Good guys and bad guys become shades of gray. She will, naturally, find herself in pursuit of Dracula. But she's also going to find herself led down a very dark path and doing some things that are just outright evil before the deck is shuffled again and the narrative skips the track."

Since the series spans multiple eras, "we'll see both Jonathan Harker and Jack Halloran in this series. And yes... they will carry knowledge over with them. But they'll have to discover the memories within themselves and really work for the understanding."

Any chance this might lead to a Dracula spinoff series? "I wouldn't know off-hand," Harris said, "but that sounds cool to me!"

Vampirella Vs. Dracula #1, a January release, is a 48-page issue priced the same as the 32-page comic; the book will feature cover art by Joseph Michael Linsner, who makes his Dynamite debut with this project.

by Cliff Biggers

BY STAN LEE & LARRY LIEBER

SPIDER-MAN



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Comic Shop News

DC: The Publisher With The Dragon Tattoo Graphic Novel

Stieg Larsson's Millennium Trilogy (*The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, *The Girl Who Played With Fire*, and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest*) have established their positions on the best-seller lists all around the world. Already adapted into films in Europe, they are also coming to American theaters.

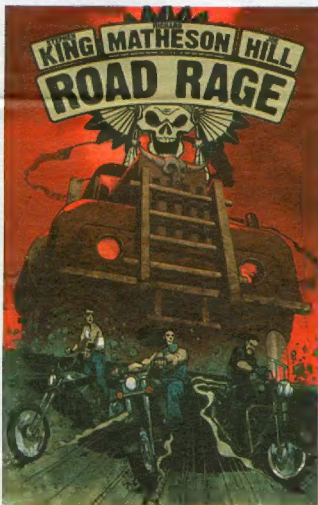
And next year, they're staking out a place for themselves on comic shop racks.

DC Entertainment has secured the worldwide rights to adapt the best-selling Millennium Trilogy novels into graphic novels that will be published under the Vertigo imprint, produced with the cooperation and approval of the estate of Stieg Larsson and Hedlund Literary Agency.

Each book by Larsson will be presented in two graphic novel volumes. The first two volumes, adapting *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, are scheduled for 2012 release. *The Girl Who Played With Fire* will follow in 2013, with *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest* wrapping up in 2014.

"The intricate characters and stories Larsson created in the Millennium Trilogy are a perfect match for the graphic novel format, where we can bring Lisbeth Salander to life in entirely new, visually compelling ways," Dan DiDio, co-publisher of DC Entertainment, said. "It's a distinct honor to work on a story that is already so popular with millions of readers around the world."

"Stieg always liked comics and it will be exciting to see the unforgettable characters he created come to life on the comics page," said Joakim Larsson, younger brother of the journalist and novelist whose untimely death in 2004 meant he didn't see even the first book in the Millennium sequence published.



IDW Has King & Hill in a Rage

Stephen King, who has made Marvel Comics home for his adaptations in recent years, is joining his son Joe Hill at IDW next year.

In early 2012, IDW will release *Road Rage*, a comic book adaptation of their work *Throttle*, which was co-written by King and Hill. This monthly two-part series begins in February, and will be followed by two issues adapting the story that inspired *Throttle*, *Richard Matheson's* classic tale of suspense *Duel*, beginning in April.

"*Throttle* is a story that really begs for a visual adaptation: it's got bikes and badasses and lots of expensive rolling iron blowing up and getting smashed," said Hill. "Who doesn't get off on that? I can't wait to see IDW get behind the wheel and take the thing out for a spin."

Throttle, the first collaboration between father-

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and-son King and Hill, was not only inspired by Matheson's *Duel*, it also only appeared in print in a limited-edition anthology honoring Matheson's works, *He is Legend*. *Throttle* and *Duel* were subsequently released as an audiobook called *Road Rage*, which is the banner title the comics will also carry.

Throttle tells the story of a motorcycle gang pursued by an unseen assailant in a big rig—but as might be expected knowing the talent involved, things aren't exactly as they seem...

"Working with the great Joe Hill (I can say that because he's my kid) on such a kick-ass story was a terrific treat, and this version takes it to whole new level," said King. "Rev up and climb on!"

Adapting the story alongside Hill and King is Chris Ryall, IDW's Chief Creative Officer and the editor of Hill's New York Times best-selling graphic novel series *Locke & Key*. Handling art duties is Nelson Daniel (whose own collaboration with Hill and artist Zach Howard, *The Cape*, was nominated for a 2011 Eisner Award). Daniel will handle full art and colors, and provide a cover; acclaimed artist Phil Noto will also provide covers for the two-part series.

Ryall will also adapt *Duel*, which will be illustrated by Rafa Garras. As a special bonus on the King/Hill story, artist Tony Harris will paint two incentive covers that show the authors themselves on a motorcycle road-trip.

"Like Joe and Steve, Richard Matheson's *Duel* had a huge impact on me as a kid," said Ryall. "And so did the works of Stephen King. Add to that mix the chance to continue working with Hill and Daniel, two of the very best creators of my generation, and you've got the makings of a project that's very special to me. And as long as I don't screw up my part, it'll hopefully be as special for all their fans when it comes out. Otherwise, you know who to blame..."

Road Rage: Throttle is slated for February and March release, with *Road Rage: Duel* following in April and May.

CSNsider—NYCC Special

Lots of news broke during New York Comic Con in mid-October; here are some of the highlights:

DC

•DC's New 52 launch was an even more phenomenal success than anyone realized: the publisher has announced that they sold over 5 million comic books in six weeks, with *Justice League* #1 selling more than 250,000 copies; *Action Comics* #1 and *Batman* #1 selling more than 200,000 copies;

Detective Comics #1, *Flash* #1, *Green Lantern* #1, and *Superman* #1 selling more than 150,000 copies; and *Aquaman* #1, *Batgirl* #1, *Batman* and *Robin* #1, *Batman: The Dark Knight* #1, *Green Lantern Corps* #1, *Green Lantern: New Guardians* #1, and *Wonder Woman* #1 selling more than 100,000 copies. "We are thrilled by the overwhelmingly positive response from retailers, fans and the creative community to DC Comics—The New 52," DC Entertainment President Diane Nelson said.

"This was a bold publishing initiative that is reinvigorating and growing the industry and medium we love."

SUPERMAN: EARTH ONE



•*Superman: Earth One* artist Shane Davis announced that he and writer J. Michael Straczynski will have the second original graphic novel in the series ready for fall 2012 release. When he revealed a photo that showed the classic Superman costume (complete with red trunks), he quipped, "Real men wear their underwear on the outside," an obvious reference to the New 52 Superman costume redesign.

Davis said that the new graphic novel will explore the limits of Superman's abilities, both physically and legally. In addition, "the book will also tackle his love life," adding, "Romance and adventure have always been two strong aspects of the character. But this will still be PG-13. It won't be too much. However, we are trying to make it more modern."

The villain Parasite will play a major role in the second graphic novel; in this world, Parasite has a

virtual addiction t power. "We took everything in *Earth One* down to its lowest common denominator and built it up from there," Davis said. "It's still true to the character's basics, but it's different."

•Chip Kidd & Dave Taylor are producing a new original graphic novel, *Batman: Death by Design*, for summer 2012 release. "Chip is a huge DC fan, and has helped us with a lot of special projects," DC co-publisher Dan DiDio said. "He has one of the most visual interpretations of Batman, writing-wise, that we've ever seen at DC Comics."

•Dan Jurgens & Keith Giffen are the new co-writers for *Superman* beginning with *Superman* #7; in addition, Jurgens will supply the pencil art for the series, which will feature inks by George Pérez (who is writing and providing layouts for the first six issues of the New 52 series).

•Andy Kubert is illustrating *Action Comics* #5, giving Rags Morales an opportunity to get ahead.

•Geoff Johns revealed that the second *Green Lantern* New 52 story arc is entitled "The Secret of the Indigo Tribe." "You'll find out who founded the Indigo Tribe, what do they want and why," Johns said.

•Paul Cornell & Ryan Kelly are launching a new Vertigo series, *Saucer Country*, in 2012. The series focuses on Arcadia Alvarado, the Governor of New Mexico, who undergoes a life-altering experience. "She's not exactly sure what happened. But she's going to use all her staff and resources to

SAUCER COUNTRY



find out. What happened to her might also be a threat to US security," Cornell said.

"It's The West Wing does The X-Files."

"*Saucer Country* is a trip through UFO mythology, a subject I've always been fascinated with. It's a dark, suspenseful, serious thriller with, I hope, some warm, very human characters at the heart of it. Between arcs that feature Arcadia and her staff venturing into the murky worlds of flying saucer lore, we'll be featuring one-off true story issues, a short version of which already appeared in the *Strange Adventures* one shot..."

The star of the series, New Mexico governor Arcadia Almorado, has eyes for the Presidency. "But something happened to her," Kelly said. "She's been abducted—possibly by an alien. She's running for President, but she has to come to terms with what happened to her... she has to come to terms with it, and prove it—and possibly warn the government that something is coming..."

• *Selwin Hinds & Denys Cowan* are producing a new Vertigo series, *Voodoo Child*. The series, which is set in New Orleans, stars Dominique Laveau, a woman who has been falsely accused of upsetting the city's delicate balance of power between natural and supernatural. Hinds said that he hopes "to do for voodoo what Mike Carey did for Christianity with *Lucifer*," adding that "this is not your grandmother's voodoo story. It's grounded in mythology... it's grounded in character... it's grounded in the city."

• Don't look for Doomsday to show up in the New 52 any time soon. "I don't know if we have a spin on him yet that we feel comfortable with," Matt Idelson said.

• Geoff Johns confirmed that Jack Kirby's villainous creation Darkseid is the adversary in the first *Justice League* story arc by Johns and artist Jim Lee. "Jim and I talked about the first story, and we agreed that they should fight DC's greatest villain—and that's Darkseid!"

• Talking about the reason he modified Wonder Woman's origin to make her the daughter of Zeus, writer Brian Azzarello said, "I was kind of sick of the conversation being about her pants; I wanted to make it about her genes."

• Ann Nocenti is signing on as writer of *Green Arrow*. Her first goal is to create a Typhoid Mary class girlfriend/villain for Green Arrow (a reference to the popular character she created during her tenure on *Daredevil*). "J.T. and Dan gave me a lot of juice stuff to work with, so I'll definitely be continuing some of what they did, too," Nocenti said.

• Look for a major character to return in *Justice League #5*—but not as a member of the team. "Starting with *Justice League #5*, Gary Frank and I will do a second story in every issue called 'The Curse of Shazam,'" Geoff Johns announced. This series will relaunch Shazam—and if we're lucky, it'll pave the way for a new *Shazam!* series starring the original Captain Marvel.

• DC also has plans to add bonus stories to the pages of *Action Comics*.

• Geoff Johns confirmed that Ryan Choi is definitely the new Atom; Ray Palmer remains a prominent member of the cast of *Frankenstein, Agent of SHADE*.

• Jeff Lemire, Dan DiDio, & Keith Giffen have a *Frankenstein, Agent of SHADE/OMAC* crossover planned for the fifth issues of both books; Lemire said that the two books would tell the same story from the opposite perspectives.

• Batman will make an appearance in *I, Vampire #5*.

• DC's keeping mum about their plans for the new *Justice Society* series, not revealing if it's set in the Golden Age, or if it stars the original heroes or new versions. "We're working on the project by James Robinson & Nicola Scott, and we've announced it's taking place on Earth-2... I can't give you any other information about that," Dan DiDio said.

• A crossover between *Swamp Thing* and *Animal Man* is in the works, involving the Red and the Green (and no, it's not a Christmas story...).

• Is Wally West destined to play a role in DC's New 52? When a fan posed that question at a DC panel, Geoff Johns declined to answer directly, instead advising the fan to "keep reading."

• DC Direct is going to a shorter "order window"

effective immediately. As of November solicitations, DC Direct products will now be solicited four months before release.



Dark Horse

• Talk about a major change in direction: Dark Horse has enlisted the *Demo* creative team of Brian Wood & Becky Cloonan to chronicle the adventures of Robert E. Howard's barbarian hero in *Conan the Barbarian*, which kicks off with an adaptation of REH's "Queen of the Black Coast." Look for the first issue in early February.

• Bad news for Boba: Tom Taylor is writing *Star Wars: Blood Ties*—Boba Fett Is Dead, slated for April release. "Boba Fett is dead," Taylor said.

"The most infamous hunter in the galaxy has been hunted. He's lying, broken, on the desert floor. He's more blade-holes than man. It's the ultimate ending. However, this is just the start of our story. With the fall of Fett broadcast across the galaxy, someone rises to avenge him. But who would care about the death of a man like Fett? Bounty hunters aren't exactly known for their enduring, close friendships but even a man like Boba Fett has family... and now a Blood Tie demands blood."

• Darth Vader returns to action in *Star Wars: Darth Vader and the Ghost Prison*, a five-issue limited series by Haden Blackman & Agustín Alessio slated to premiere in May. *Ghost Prison*, which takes place a year after *Revenge of the Sith*, showcases Darth Vader's impact on the galaxy as he serves the Emperor to the best of his abilities.

Ghost Prison also marks the return of Moff Trachta, who will play a vital role in the series.

• Dark Horse has a *Dragon Age* comic in the works, based on the videogame—and game writer David Gaider is also writing the comic. "We want all the people who write the games to write the comics!" Dark Horse editor Jeremy Atkins said.

• John Jackson Miller, Marco Castiello, & Vincenzo Acciunio continue the story of Jedi Knight Kerra Holt in *Star Wars: Knight Errant—Escape*, a five-issue series debuting in June.

Image

• Rob Liefeld's Extreme Studios is being reactivated in 2012. Liefeld and Image's Eric Stephenson are relaunching the imprint through Image Comics with such projects as *Youngblood*, *Supreme*, and *Prophet*. Rather than relaunching the books with new first issues, however, Liefeld is picking up right where he left off, with *Youngblood #71*, *Supreme #57*, etc. seeing release in lieu of new first issues.

Liefeld explained the reasoning behind Extreme Studios' return. "Eric Stephenson huddled with me almost two years ago to secure this entire project. To be honest, there were several publishers that had aggressively courted this catalogue, but in the end, my ties with Eric were too strong to sever," Rob Liefeld told *comicbookre-*



sources.com. "Eric presented an aggressive publishing plan, and we commissioned all the various teams to begin work on the Extreme launch. Seriously, this could not have worked out better and we have a great combination of established superstars and up and coming talent that are shaping these new books. Eric has maintained a firm hand as far as deadlines go and we are ready to rock the comic racks with this first wave of new titles! It's been a long time coming. I'm confident we have the right teams."

The line will include *Prophet* by Brandon Graham & Simon Roy; *Glory* by Joe Keatinge & Ross Campbell; *Bloodstrike* by Tim Seeley & Francesco Gaston; *Youngblood* by John McLaughlin (one of the writers of the acclaimed film *Black Swan*), Jon Malin, and Rob Liefeld; and most surprising of all, *Supreme* by Alan Moore, Erik Larsen, & Cory Hanscher ("We've had Alan Moore's final script for years," Liefeld said, "but we needed a prominent creator to take the reins and complete the vision. Erik Larsen kind of popped off the top of his head what he would do with *Supreme*, and myself, Robert Kirkman, and Eric Stephenson hounded him



for months to commit to doing it.")

Additionally, Liefeld indicated that there are other unpublished Alan Moore scripts for *Youngblood* and other projects that will also see print in the upcoming year. "Alan was in his peak form back then," Liefeld said. "*Supreme* fueled his comic book come back and many of his Extreme ideas became the basis of the former ABC line. We will showcase the best that Alan did at that period of his career."



• Joe Keatinge is launching a new series at Image, *Hell, Yeah*, illustrated by Andre Scymanowicz. The book explores the effects on everyday people—and the world as a whole—caused by the wide-



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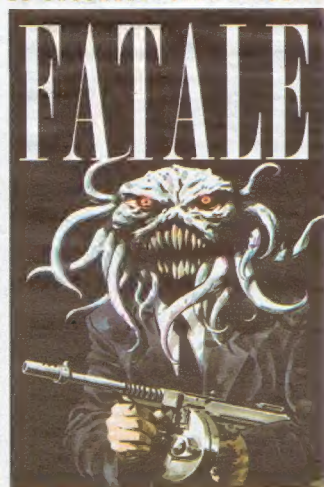


spread presence of superheroes. How are the legal issues overcome? How does the celebrity issue factor in? These are questions that Keatinge will answer in the ongoing series, which begins with a story arc that follows a man who is trying to find out why alternate-universe versions of himself are being murdered.

• Ed Brubaker & Sean Phillips, who have done most of their recent work for Marvel's Icon imprint, are taking their next project to Image Comics. *Fatale* blends noir fiction, femme fatale drama, and Lovecraftian horror in an intriguing manner. "I've been wanting for a while to do something with a more supernatural element to it," Brubaker said. "*Fatale* mixes what we do and all the ways we've poked fun at the noir genre. If *Incognito* was us doing 'What if Doc Savage, Dashiell Hammett, and Raymond Chandler had all existed in the same universe?' then this is a weird combo of James M. Cain and H.P. Lovecraft."

The series focuses on a woman who may or may not be the living embodiment of the femme fatale archetype. The series follows her through multiple time periods, offering different viewpoints from multiple characters along the way.

ED BRUBAKER SEAN PHILLIPS



Fatale is currently planned as a twelve-issue limited series, but it is structured so that it could continue if reader response warrants.

• Jimmy Palmiotti, Frank Tieri, & Amanda Conner offer an edgy, mature-readers take on superheroics in *Cap'n Brooklyn*, a three-issue series that is designed to appeal to the same audience as their hooker-turned-superhero farce *The Pro*. The series spotlights an ordinary guy who takes care of his grandfather in Brooklyn, where he gains



superpowers from an exposure to the Gowanus Canal.

• Jean-Paul Bonjour & Jeff Roening reveal the uglier aspect of cosmetics in *Alpha Girl*, an offbeat zombie comic. In this series, the zombie plague is caused by a bad batch of cosmetics... and it affects women only. The star of the series is a teenage girl with a natural immunity to zombification; she embarks on an odyssey through a zombie-plagued world to free her brother from a juvenile

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detention facility before he can become a zombie snack.

• **Landry Walker & Eric Jones** present a *Teen Titans* meets *Lord of the Flies* conceptual mashup in *The Danger Club*, a series that follows a group of teenage superhero sidekicks who suddenly find themselves without heroic guidance when their mentors venture into space to confront an extra-terrestrial menace.

• **David Hine** is taking over as writer of *The Darkness* beginning with #101, joining artist *Jeremy Houn*.



IDW

• Who better to tell the story of stage magician and illusionist than a sleight-of-hand aficionado and stage-magic expert? That's why IDW has enlisted *Jon Armstrong*, one of the finest sleight-of-hand artists in the world and a consulting Imagineer for Disney Entertainment, to join writer *Mike Costa* and artist *Ryan Browne* for the launch of *Smoke and Mirrors*, a creator-owned project that follows a stage magician who finds himself transported to a world where magic is real and he must use trickery and illusions to survive.

"*Smoke and Mirrors* is my first creator-owned book," Costa said, "and I am immensely proud to have it published by this company that has given the industry some of the greatest creator-owned books of the last decade. The only thing I'm most proud of is the fact that I get to do it with *Ryan Browne*, a ridiculously talented artist who has been my best friend for literally 20 years, and *Jon Armstrong*, one of the finest magicians I've ever seen, and my friend and mentor."

"As a life-long comic fan, I've always wanted to create in this medium," Armstrong added. "Being able to apply my unique skill set to comics and working with creators I admire was just way too exciting to pass up. Because of how I related to our magician and protagonist *Terry Ward*, I wanted an especially innovative way to use magic as more than a gimmick. Magic is an essential component of propelling *Terry's* story forward, while allowing the reader to have the same engaging and amazing experiences our characters are having."

• IDW is producing a 110-page full-color graphic novel adaptation of *Sergei Eisenstein's* classic 1938 film *Alexander Nevsky*. The adaptation by *Ben McCool & Mario Guevara* is entitled *Nevsky*; the book focuses on the medieval Russian hero who defended the nation by defeating Teutonic invaders in a conflict that culminated in a battle on the frozen Lake Peipus.

• We already knew that IDW's upcoming *Magic: The Gathering* comic book would be packaged with a bonus card—and now we know what that card is. The first issue of the comic will include an alternate art version of *Treasure Hunt*, featuring art by *Aleksis Briclot*.

Legendary

• **Bob Schreck** and **Legendary Entertainment** are collecting *Paul Pope's The One Trick Rip-Off* in the spring of 2012. "We're collecting this in cover for the first time," Schreck said. The project, which has a new cover, includes over a hundred pages of new material as well as new color supplied by *All-Star Superman* colorist *Jamie Grant*.



Later in the year, **Legendary** will offer *PulpHype2012*, which is much more than a reissue of the out-of-print *Paul Pope* volume *PulpHype*. "It was originally announced that we were putting in 60% more material," Pope said, "but it looks like it's going to be a lot more, which is exciting. We're looking at doing it in a 12" x 12" LP format.... Between these two books, this material is going to collect pretty much everything outside of *THB*, *Batting Boy*, the *Batman* stuff, the *Marvel* stuff—everything outside of that is going to be in these two books. Everything from 1993-2011—almost 500 pages of new material!"

• Acclaimed artist *Michael Wm Kaluta* is also working on a project for **Legendary**: a graphic novel based on *John Milton's Paradise Lost*. *Steve Niles* is writing the 125-page adaptation.

Marvel

• Just in time for the *Avengers* film, **Marvel** has confirmed that the best-selling *Ultimate Spider-Man* creative team of *Brian Bendis & Mark Bagley* (currently collaborating on the creator-owned project *Brilliant*) will launch *Avengers Assemble*



in March 2011. *Tom Brevoort* called it a "best of the *Avengers*" book, adding that it will focus on the characters who appear in the upcoming film—*Captain America*, *Iron Man*, *Thor*, *Hulk*, *Black Widow*, and *Hawkeye*—with a new *Zodiac* take the villainous role in the first five-part arc.

Avengers Assemble is not a flashback or year-one sort of book, **Marvel** stressed; this is a contemporary *Avengers* title that will join the franchise and link to the other *Bendis*-written *Avengers* titles.

• *Jeeph Loeb & Simone Bianchi* are reuniting in 2012 to bring back one of **Marvel's** most popular villains. "Those of you who have been clamoring for *Sabretooth* to make *Wolverine's* life miserable will be glad to hear that he's coming back," Loeb said. While *Sabretooth* was apparently decapitated in his last appearance, Loeb pointed out that "if you go back and actually look at the last issue of 'Evolution,' it is there. We left bread crumbs along the way. It's not going to be a time travel trick."

• **Marvel** had no definite news regarding a *Marvelman* series, although publisher *Dan Buckley* offered a very promising teaser. "Keep your eyes and ears peeled," Buckley said. "There will be something within the next twelve months; we are very excited about that."

• *Dexter* creator and best-selling novelist *Jeff Lindsay* is writing an original *Dexter* series for **Marvel** in 2012. These will be all-new stories rather than adaptations of existing novels, which means that these comics will be absolute must-haves for fans of *Dexter* in print (as well as on Showtime, although these comics will follow the novel continuity rather than being based on the Showtime series).

• Look for the first **Marvel/Disney** crossover in November, when "Prep & Landing—Mansion: Impossible" appears as an eight-page backup in select **Marvel** titles in November, following characters from *Disney's Prep & Landing* as they prepare *Avengers Mansion* for a visit from *Santa Claus*. **Marvel** editor *Tom Brevoort* said it would "a completely free bonus" in such books as *Avengers*

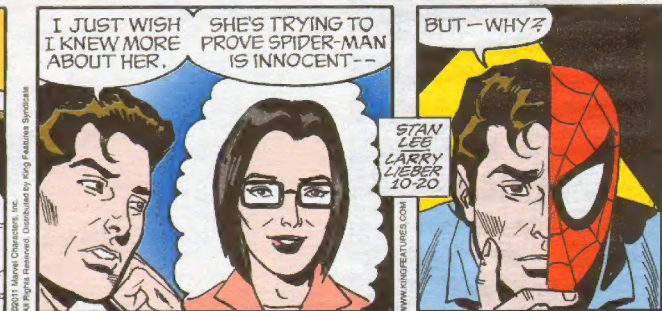
#19. **Marvel's Joe Quesada** added that, if fans like it, they'll do more such special crossover stories in the future.

• The *Runaways* will play a prominent role in *Avengers Academy* in a two-part story that begins in *Avengers Academy* #27. "As for an ongoing series, that's a wait and see," *C.B. Cebulski* said.



The *X-Men* will also pay a visit to the *Academy* in the near future, which will pave the way for a father/son confrontation between *Quicksilver* and *Magneto*.

• The current *Thunderbolts* team will venture into the past, where they will confront the original *Baron Zemo*-led *Thunderbolts* in *Thunderbolts* #171, courtesy of *Jeff Parker & Declan Shalvey*.



SCARLET SPIDER



going to be establishing this new sentient race that evolved from the original Super-Adaptoids. The Adaptoids are going to be a giant new thread in the Avengers' lives."

•Marvel will launch a weekly miniseries, *Hulk Smash Avengers*, in February. "Through the eras, the Hulk has changed his personalities, his colors, how smart he is, and the Avengers have altered their lineup, they've expanded, they've shrunk," editor Bill Rosemann said. The series will feature Hulk-Avengers slugfests from different eras, jumping forward about ten years in publishing time for each issue. *Hulk Smash Avengers* #1, set in the Lee-Kirby Silver Age, is written by Tom DeFalco with art by Ron Frenz & Sal Buscema; the second issue, set in the 70s, is produced by Joe Casey & Max Fiumara; the third issue, set during the Roger Stern era, is by Stern and Karl Moline; #4, set in the 90s era, is written by Jim McCann; the final issue, set during the current era, is by Fred Van Lente & Michael Avon Oeming.

•Marvel played it coy regarding their whole "It's Coming" promotion, although they did present (without comment) a slide that featured what appeared to be a fiery phoenix, supplemented by this text: Aaron • Bendis • Brubaker • Coipel • Fraction • Hickman • Kubert • Romita Jr. • 2012.

•Joe Quesada confirmed that Marvel has short list of several characters they are looking at for possible series development, and Captain Marvel is high on that list.

•Disney is working with Marvel on numerous projects to introduce Marvel characters and the Marvel Universe to younger readers. Some books, such as the *Origins* hardcover series, are already in comic shops. Others are in the works, including *Meet the Marvel Superheroes*, a 140-page hardcover feature background info on a hundred Marvel characters; and *The Amazing Spider-Man Storybook Collection*, a hefty 320-page hardcover featuring young-reader-friendly short stories pitting Spider-Man against some of his most famous foes.

•Look for a Daredevil/Spider-Man crossover storyline in *Amazing Spider-Man* #677 and *Daredevil* #8. Mark Waid's story will bring the Black Cat back into Spider-Man's world.

•The new *X-Men: Legacy* creative team is writer Christos Gage and artist David Baldeon.

•Brian Wood is writing the five-issue miniseries *Wolverine and the X-Men: Alpha and Omega*, with art by Mark Brooks & Roland Boschi.

•*Age of Apocalypse* starts as an ongoing series in May, courtesy of David Lapham & Roberto De La Torre.

Other Publishers

•Ape Entertainment is pursuing one primo property for its all-ages line: *Sesame Street*! "We are incredibly excited about our current negotiations with Sesame Workshop and the possibility of being able to bring their expertise in educating and entertaining children to comics," Ape COO Brent E. Erwin said... but the deal isn't done quite yet...

•Asepen has announced its first ongoing series, *Executive Assistant: Assassins*, written by Aspen editor-in-chief Vince Hernandez. •Fred Van Lente & Ryan Dunlavey, the duo responsible for the irreverent *Action Philosophers* and *Comic Book Comics*, are venturing into the realm of political history with their next project, *Action Presidents*.



•Yen Press has announced manga adaptations of works by best-selling authors Sherrilyn Kenyon and Cassandra Clare. Yen's Kenyon project is *Dark-Hunters: Infinity*, a two-volume adaptation of *Chronicles of Nick*, a prequel to the *Dark-Hunter* novels.

The publisher has more ambitious plans for Cassandra Clare's works: they'll launch manga adaptations of the entire *Infernal Devices* trilogy, with art by Hyekyung Baek. The novels focus on Tessa Gray, an American teenager traveling in Victorian London who finds herself involved in the

supernatural underworld of the great city.

Both volumes are slated to debut in comic shops in the fall of 2012.

•Viz has announced that they will cease print publication of the English-language *Shonen Jump* in early 2012.



•Christopher Yost & Ryan Stegman join forces for January's launch of *Scarlet Spider*—but if you don't want to wait that long, you can get a sneak peek in Marvel's *Point One* oneshot slated for release next week! "For reasons that are as yet unrevealed, Scarlet Spider is on the run, heading down Mexico way," Yost told MTV. "But as the story progresses, those motivations will change because life gets in the way."

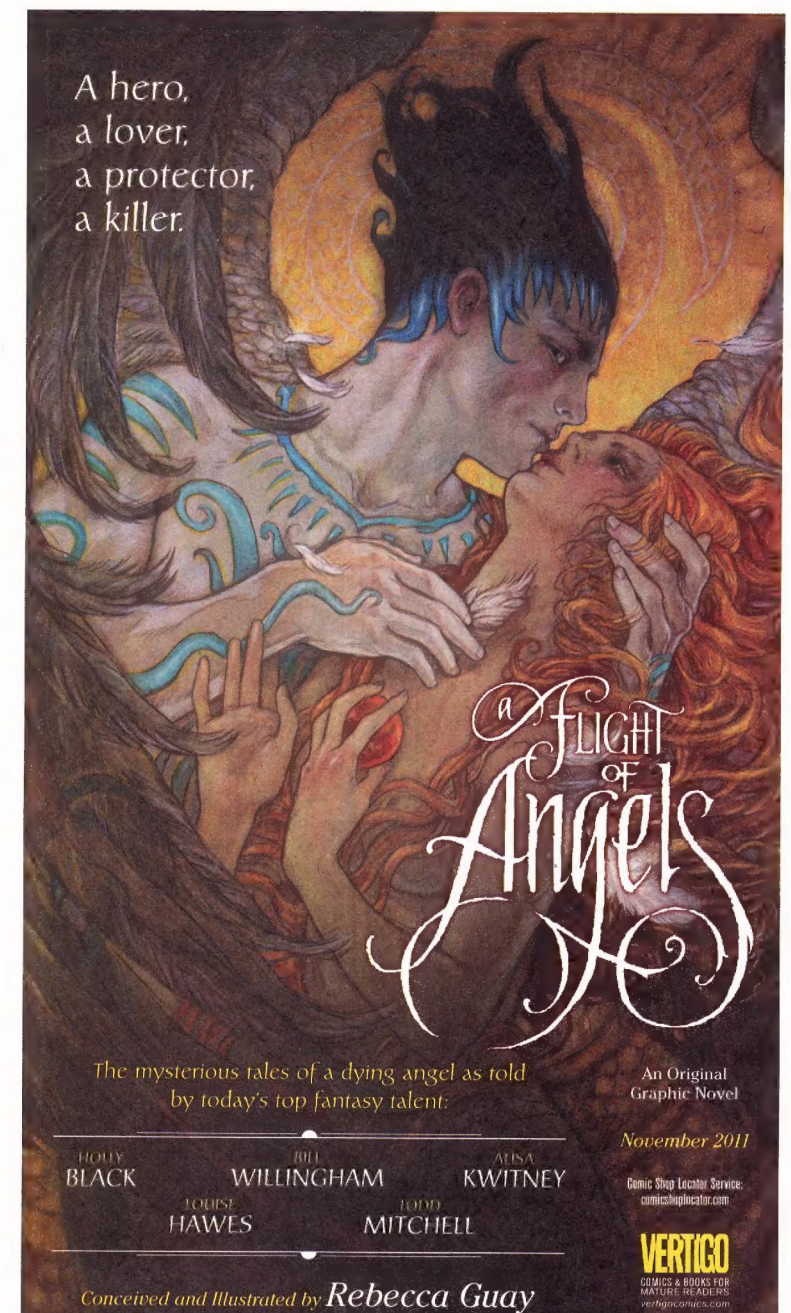
•Rick Remender has been tapped to write *Secret Avengers* after Warren Ellis completes his run. Remender will make his debut with *Secret Avengers* #21.1 and will be joined by new artist Gabriel Hardman as of *Secret Avengers* #22.

"*Secret Avengers* #21.1 sees the reveal of the new Masters of Evil," Remender told *newsarama.com*. "In #22, we meet the Adaptoids for the first time—Sentinels hunt mutants, Adaptoids hunt Avengers. We're

SECRET AVENGERS



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